

REPORT
OF THE
JOINT COMMITTEE
OF THE
EIGHTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
STATE OF IOWA,
APPOINTED TO VISIT THE
BOYS' DEPARTMENT OF THE STATE REFORM SCHOOL
AT
ELDORA.

[PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.]

DES MOINES:
F. M. MILLS, STATE PRINTER.
1880.

REPORT.

*Report of the Joint Committee of the Eighteenth General Assembly
appointed to visit the Boys' Department of the State Reform School
at Eldora.*

TO THE EIGHTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

Your committee appointed to visit the Boys' Department of the State Reform School would respectfully report that they have made that visit, carefully noting their duty as set forth in the concurrent resolution of instructions to visiting committees.

In addition to the regular appropriation for the support fund, we find the Seventeenth General Assembly made the following appropriations for this institution:

Contingent (understood to be repair) fund.....	\$1000 00
Water supply fund	1500 00

Of the contingent fund your committee find that all has been drawn and about \$900 of same expended.

Of the water supply fund only \$500 has been drawn, and only \$245.99 of that expended, leaving a balance of cash in the hands of the treasurer of amount drawn of \$254.01. This, together with balance undrawn, leaves \$1254.01 of the appropriation of two years ago ready to be used in supplying this great necessity.

The Superintendent and Trustees think this amount is insufficient to construct tanks and furnish the necessary pipes and apparatus to provide an inexhaustible supply of water at all the buildings now in use, at all seasons of the year, and your committee are inclined to the opinion that they are correct, although we have seen no reliable estimates nor are we sufficiently informed with regard to the cost or kind of apparatus necessary to enable us to recommend any specific sum as an additional appropriation. It is very evident that the water supply is

insufficient, and the means of getting it to the buildings ready for use is not only very laborious but exceedingly annoying—having to be carried in buckets, mainly by the boys, to the different buildings, emptied into barrels standing in the way, and there remains until used up, when the same process is repeated. We saw a few of the boys detailed for this employment tugging away under their heavy burdens, and it reminded us of our boyhood days, in *pod-augur times*. Thirty years ago this kind of employment for boys did very well, for many of us knew no *better* method; but in the humble opinion of your committee a much more valuable employment for boys of the present day can be introduced, and thereby save the heavy drain upon the finer feelings of impetuous boys, that must otherwise require a large amount of moral suasion to supply. We would therefore recommend that a competent person be employed immediately to make a careful estimate of the amount necessary to furnish an abundant supply of water at all the buildings in use, and when such estimate is completed, that the required appropriation for that purpose be made.

Your committee believe, from the investigations made, that the appropriations thus far expended have been wisely and economically used; that they have been expended for the purposes for which they were appropriated. And we further believe that Chapter 67 of the Acts of the Seventeenth General Assembly, in not contracting indebtedness in excess of appropriations, has been fully and carefully complied with, and that there has been no diversion of any money from the specific purpose for which it was drawn out of the State treasury.

Following we give a list of the names of persons employed by the institution, for what purpose employed, and salary of each:

	PER ANNUM.
E. H. Winans and wife, Superintendent and Matron.....	\$ 1500
B. J. Miles, Assistant-superintendent.....	600
J. A. Bair, gardener and family manager No. 1.....	420
D. M. Crouse, shoemaker and family manager No. 2.....	480
J. W. Stephens, teacher and family manager No. 3.....	480
C. P. Butler, teacher and assistant family manager	360
Reuben Billings, farmer.....	360
J. B. Wilson, engineer.....	360
J. M. Dorr, teacher.....	300
E. B. Echard, sub-farmer.....	264
C. F. Shepard, night watchman.....	240
H. B. Shilling, baker	240
Frank Keough, manager surplus yard.....	192

	PER ANNUM.
Mrs. Laura Brown, cook	\$ 192
Mrs. B. J. Miles, assistant matron.....	180
Mrs. J. W. Stephens, dining-hall manager	180
Mrs. D. M. Crouse, care of family housework.....	180
Mrs. Reuben Billings, tailoress.....	180
Miss Sadie Wright, general housework.....	180
Miss Mary A. Robertson, laundress.....	180

All of the above persons receive in addition to salary, board, rooms, lights and fuel, as we understand has been the custom of the institution—they all having been employed with that understanding. Two small children of Superintendent Winans and one small boy of B. J. Miles, Assistant Superintendent, receive board at the expense of the State. No person receives clothing or anything not herein mentioned at the expense of the State, that we could learn, except the boys committed.

Your committee agree in the opinion that the entire amount of the appropriation for repair fund should have been expended—as the general appearance in and about the buildings belonging to the institution bears unmistakable evidence. The amount expended has no doubt been economically used, but there is such a general appearance of dilapidation throughout all the buildings used, except the barn, ice and wood-house, that it will necessarily require quite a large immediate outlay to put them in good repair; but when once properly repaired, the *annual* outlay for this purpose can be greatly reduced and thereby save considerable to the State in running through a period of ten years. We believe the sum of \$5,000 can be at once judiciously used in repairing and furnishing the three family buildings belonging to the institution. These buildings are to be used for all time, by the boys and family managers for *family* apartments, play-rooms, school-rooms and dormitories. They are the *family homes* for the boys—there their plastic minds are to receive that culture which should gradually lead them from their thoughtless, boyish and youthful habits, to purer, nobler and better lives as they develop into manhood; and our best educators, after years of experience, all agree that one of the best means to a *higher culture* of children and youth is a *high grade of surroundings*—grounds tastefully laid out and beautifully ornamented with trees and flowers—buildings spacious, neat, airy and cheerful, and in perfect repair, well furnished, and the walls in the different apartments decorated with pictures, paintings and mottoes, calculated to

inspire in the youthful heart and mind higher thoughts and aspirations. These and kindred means of culture have been successfully used in many parts of our own State in our public and private schools, and it has been universally conceded that they have had their positive refining and elevating influence upon our children and youth; and who will say they do not have their influence in the *family* and *home*, and your committee fully believe that the same influences employed to advantage in our public and private schools and in our *family homes*, are alike applicable in this institution.

The products of the farm for the past two years have added largely to the support fund. Should this branch of industry be from any cause, cut-off, by failure of crops or disease among the stock, the present \$8 per month per capita would hardly be adequate to meet the demands, should any higher grade of living be desired, and while we would not feel justified at the present time in recommending any additional per capita for support fund, yet we feel unwilling to pass without recommending that a *higher grade* of living should be sought.

We fully believe that the Superintendent is using every effort in his power to do the best he can with the means at his command—we find him exceedingly cautious in regard to running into any kind of extravagance that would be likely to overreach any appropriation, and we heartily commend his course; but if the experience of the past and the prospects of the future clearly demonstrate the fact that a higher grade can be attained by keeping the *per capita* the same, we should recommend that course, rather than a reduction of the *per capita*. Universal harmony and order seems to prevail among the superintendents, officers, teachers and school, showing that a well organized system of management and discipline is in force; the order among the boys impressed us most favorably, and we could hardly believe that we were in the presence of those who had been declared guilty of misdemeanors. Of the \$42,000 almost entirely sunk in the new main building beyond a hope of ever successfully utilizing, your committee would gladly refrain from saying anything, we cannot feel like recommending large appropriations asked to finish it for present occupancy, for we believe such a building is not now needed, nor will it be for many years to come. Still it may be wise to make a sufficient appropriation to take down the tower and fully inclose it, and thus preserve the building until such time as the institution might use it, or until such time as the city of Eldora should increase in population to that extent,

that it could be advantageously disposed of for a hotel, as the building is far better calculated for hotel purposes than for the use for which it was designed. The building is a huge monument of discredit to the architect and those who had a hand in its construction, but as we have the elephant upon our hands, teaching us a most important lesson, it may be well to preserve it as a memorial of warning to us and generations yet unborn.

Respectfully submitted,

R. W. TIRRILL,

On the part of the Senate.

J. A. HARVEY,

F. M. RICHEY,

On the part of the House.